

are unfortunately poor. The chief reason why the Catholics in Auckland are not in the same position, financially and otherwise, as those of the other colonies in Australia is that there is, besides these emigrants, a second flock, whose welfare I have very much at heart—the original Maoris of New Zealand—an intelligent and warlike race, susceptible of great improvement in the arts of civilisation. The census of 1886 gave a population of 45,000, 35,000 of whom form a large proportion of the inhabitants of Auckland. I have, therefore, to make provision for two separate and distinct people, totally different from each other, and both capable of being brought into the most intimate relations with the Church of God. The history of this mission goes back to about fifty years, when Gregory XVI. selected Mons. Pompallier, a priest of the city of Lyons, who took up his abode in a province of Western Oceania. Unfortunately, by this time other than Catholic missionaries had arrived, and when it came to their knowledge that a Catholic was about to come amongst them, they suggested to the natives the advisability of causing him to disappear. The latter, being little better than savages, were indeed at this time absolute cannibals, were only too glad of the opportunity. Three days after the arrival of the Catholic missionary he was startled one morning while reading his Breviary by beholding himself surrounded by about thirty of these cannibals. The chief addressed him somewhat in this manner—

"Stranger, who has invited thee to our shores? We are informed that thou art here with the intention of taking possession of these our lands, and we therefore regard thee as our enemy, and as such purpose dealing with thee."

The missionary, who was beginning to feel uncomfortable, and whose heart was rapidly failing him, conveyed, through the medium of an interpreter, that his intentions were not hostile, but, on the contrary, were allied with those of peace and prosperity, and he had come, not to make war, but "to teach them the way to heaven and the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

"I am here," he said, "simply to put you in possession of a far better land than that which you now possess. Let time prove whether I am your enemy or not. Meanwhile I shall regard you as my friends."

These simple words had a marvellous effect. The chief again rose to his feet and said—

"The stranger speaks words of reason; he is right. It is better for us to wait and see whether he is our enemy or not—we will wait."

The next difficulty which presented itself was the partiality with which all the chiefs began to regard him, for instead of wishing him from amongst them, they now began to clamour for him individually. As he had only two missionaries, it was utterly impossible to comply with all their requests. He was therefore compelled to content himself and the chiefs by hoping that at the earliest opportunity he would cause other missionaries to come out from Europe who would teach them the doctrines of the Christian religion. At the time of which I am speaking it took three years before the missionary could receive a reply to any appeal to Europe, and about this time the Bishop died. The diocese was consequently left without a priest, and it is not to be wondered at that they relapsed into heathenism. Previous to the death of Mons. Pompallier, the British Government had despatched to New Zealand, through the medium of the Bible Society, Protestant missionaries, who caused the Bible to be written in the language of the Maoris. It was scattered broadcast among the natives, and for a considerable time remained the only printed book in their language. Having been taught the arts of reading and writing, they were now arrived at a considerable state of civilisation, so much so that they wanted to shake off the British yoke and begin life anew. The contact with the British settlers made a decidedly antagonistic impression upon the minds of the natives with regard to their intercourse with any new Catholic missionaries, and when, eight years after the death of M. Pompallier, a successor was appointed through the instrumentality of his Grace Archbishop Croke it was found that the diocese would have to be converted, not from mere cannibalism and ignorance of any duty, but from absolute heathenism. The work of re-converting the Maoris continued under the direction of his Grace Archbishop Croke, and afterwards under that of his Eminence Cardinal Cullen, till I was sent out, about ten years ago. In due course I arrived at my new destination, and was not slow in realising that I was not about to enter upon a life similar to that of the parish priest of Haverstock Hill. It is a question of living amongst uncivilised people, far away from congenial society, exposed to the greatest hardships in every department of social well-being. And on this account it is indeed an apostolic life, and it is not every priest in the Church of God that is called to that apostolic life. I set to work among the missionary societies to ascertain whether I could get help to re-establish the Maories' mission. The bulk of the answers were unsatisfactory; but at last I received a letter from a society at Mill Hill stating that a priest would be duly sent out to me. To this I said, *Deo Gratias*—thanks be to God—and on the Christmas day of 1885 arrived in Auckland one who deemed it a noble work to endeavour, by hard work and perseverance, to gain over the poor Maories who were again beginning to follow the teaching of God's Gospel. At present there are four missionaries devoted to the work; but during last year it was my misfortune to lose five, and it is now a

question of having to take out more. It is my wish to take out four priests and three nuns, but the expense attached to this wish, if carried out, necessitates an expenditure of £50 for each. The population is also increasing rapidly, and we must provide for the accommodation of the boys and the girls in proper schools. Besides this there is the all-important question—the erection of fit and proper places for divine worship. These necessities cannot be met without a sufficient sum of ready money, and it is for this that I appeal to your generosity to-day.

## GREYMOUTH.

(From an occasional Correspondent.)

December 27th, 1891.

OUR much-deferred and long-anticipated concert came off on Wednesday last, in the Volunteer Hall, and was, to say the least of it, a thorough success. Grave doubts had been entertained before the entertainment as to whether the performers would be able to do full justice to so phenomenally heavy a programme, but any such doubts must have been dispelled by last Wednesday night's performance. The pieces staged were, "The Area Belle," a farce; and "The Lady of Lyons," in burlesque, and we must indeed compliment the management upon selecting pieces so suited to a Catholic audience, both "The Area Belle" and "The Lady of Lyons" being almost entirely free of any of the nonsensical and frothy sentiment, so predominant in our modern plays. "The Area Belle" was staged first, the characters being as follows:—Penelope (the area belle), Miss M. Dupré; Pitchur (in the police), Mr H. Mulvihill; Tosser (in the grenadiers), Mr P. M'Cullough; Walker Chalks (milkman), Mr F. Mulvihill; Mrs Croaker (the missus), Mrs A. Yarrall. Miss M. Dupré made a model servant girl, the scene in which she indignantly refuses Walker Chalk's offer of marriage being an excellent piece of acting. Mr H. Mulvihill and Mr P. M'Cullough (Penelope's ardent lovers) created much amusement by their numerous blunders, and the awkward position they were placed in when Mrs Croaker arrived on the scene literally brought down the house. Mrs Yarrall played the part of the erratic and eccentric Mrs Croaker to perfection, while Mr F. Mulvihill, as Walker Chalks, showed promise of great capacity for low comedy. "The Lady of Lyons" was then staged, and passed off with even greater *colâtes* than its predecessor, The *dramatis personæ* were as follows:—M. Beauseant, Mr P. M'Cullough; Colonel Damas, Mr Wickes; Claude Melnotte, Mr D. Jones; Gaspar, Mr H. Mulvihill; Landlord of Golden Lion, Mr Matthews; the family porter, Mr Moore; M. Deschappelles, Mr F. Mulvihill; Madam Deschappelles, Mrs Yarrall; Pauline (the Lady of Lyons), Miss M. Dupré; Jaquet, Miss S. Dupré; Widow Melnotte, Mr F. J. Elmer. Miss M. Dupré and Mr P. M'Cullough were the most prominent of the leading characters, and I must compliment the former very much indeed for the manner in which she sustained her exceedingly heavy part. Mr M'Cullough made a decidedly clever hit as Beauseant, and displayed talents which a professional might well be proud of. He had an able companion in his *protégé*, Mr D. Jones, who, as he once or twice himself remarked, had the "air of a true poet." Mr F. Elmer, who took upon himself the representation of the Widow Melnotte, showed himself to be quite an adept in the difficult rôle of a female character, and his "rolley polley" action song convulsed the entire audience. All the other characters were equally well sustained, Mr F. Mulvihill and Mr E. A. Wickes being heartily applauded for the amusing scene in which the latter questions the genuineness of Claude Melnotte's title, and is severely rebuked by the burly shopkeeper in consequence. Altogether the performance was the best amateur production ever witnessed on the coast, the costumes and scenery being unique in their way; while it is sufficient guarantee for the quality of the music to say that it was under the supervision of Miss N. Hannan. In conclusion, I would throw out as a suggestion, now the performers have broken the ice, that the piece be repeated either in Brunnerton or Reefton, in aid of some Catholic object in this parish. Our Catholic congregation have had a considerable drain on their purses for the last few years, and I am sure would hail with delight any little financial aid in the manner indicated.

The town, which presented an unusually lively appearance during Christmas week, has now settled down to its wonted course, the visitors from up-country and neighbouring districts having all returned to their respective homes.

On Christmas night, mid-night Mass was celebrated at St Patrick's church, the Rev Father Carew officiating. The inside of the church presented a very pretty appearance, the pillars being tastefully decorated with creeping plants, ferns, flowers, etc. The High Altar looked a perfect blaze of lights, flowers, and ornaments, the most striking of the decorations being the richly-worked scroll, with the words, "Gloria in Excelsis" thereon, which hung right in the centre of the altar, against a background of dark drapery, had a very pretty effect. The Rev Father Carew delivered a very impressive sermon, choosing for his text, Christ's redemption of mankind. As is usually the case, the building was crowded to the doors.